WITH THE FLEET IN THE DARDANELLES

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VIEW FROM THE FORETOP DURING ACTION.

[*Frontispiece*

WITH THE FLEET IN THE DARDANELLES

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF NAVAL MEN AND INCIDENTS DURING THE CAMPAIGN IN THE SPRING OF 1915

BY

WILLIAM HAROLD PRICE

Sometime Chaplain of H.M.S. Triumph

WITH A PREFACE BY

SIR EVERARD FRASER, K.C.M.G.

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TO THE

CAPTAIN, OFFICERS, AND SHIP'S COMPANY

OF

H.M.S. TRIUMPH

THE AUTHOR VENTURES TO DEDICATE THESE PAGES: A MEMENTO OF MANY DAYS AND NIGHTS SPENT WITH THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SQUADRON DURING THE ATTACK ON THE DARDANELLES IN 1915

PREFACE

To the Reverend W. H. Price,
Sub-Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral,
Shanghai.

H.M. Consulate-General,
May, 1915.

My dear Padre,

I do not recall your presence in the group which, after evening service on the Sunday before the war, watched the Yarmouth, crowded with the complements from our river gunboats, leave her moorings off the Bund and slip away through the fading light to meet the Fleet outside.

Our speculations of suspense at that time held no idea so fantastic as your doing a spell as naval chaplain and seeing the "real thing." But you and we had

in common, even in those early days, the desire of service and sacrifice for the common weal, which has since been realised in greater or less degree, directly or indirectly, by the congregation that lent you to H.M.S. Triumph, sure that you and we were thus answering the call of duty.

I confess to an innocuous envy of the grand experience you enjoyed. Its poignancy is allayed by reading this record, which stamps itself faithful. The British public, prone to "grousing" in China as at home, has found a pretext for indulging its weakness in the scarcity of authentic news of the doings of our men at war. Here you give them an intimate picture of a battleship engaged in the sternest operations of war. To one of your readers, whose voyages as guest in wardrooms and cabins are still the happiest of recollections, it is keen delight to breathe again in your pages the exact atmosphere of cheerful fellowship and unobtrusive efficiency that made those occasions precious.

It is, of course, no surprise to perceive how the ship and the padre suited at once, for soundness is the keynote of life in the navy, and you are of a disposition as nobly "general" as the Norwich physician boasted himself of. Moreover, you have the talisman to open all honest hearts and souls — the self-forgetfulness that marks the followers of the Master.

It was like you to ask me to introduce this fascinating book to the public (despite the proverb about good liquor); and it was like you to get a prompt assent from one painfully shy of writing anything less sawdusty than despatches.

I wish you could have a worthier introduction: you could not have an introduction written with more admiration and good will.

I am,
My dear Padre,
Yours very truly,
E. H. Fraser.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THERE is no attempt at system or chronology in the short chapters that follow. They represent some impressions of a priest serving temporarily as a Naval Chaplain during the campaign in the Dardanelles. Some were written on the ship; some have been written since leaving. The author is only too well aware that a layman is always in danger of making technical errors, of using phrases clumsily or incorrectly. If there is anything in these pages that jars the nerves of Service men, he makes his apologies and begs them to recollect that he is but a shore-going parson who scarcely had time to get thoroughly saturated with the inimitable spirit of the navy.

His Majesty's Consul-General has been good enough to write a Preface, and the author publishes it with gratitude to Sir Everard for his kindliness, though with a *non sum dignus* to the public.

Shanghai, 1915.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	vii
	AUTHOR'S NOTE	xi
I.	IN CLASSIC WATERS . . .	3
II.	THE FORE-CROSS PASSAGE . .	11
III.	HELL'S GATES	21
IV.	THE "PRESS BUREAU" . .	29
V.	SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS . .	37
VI.	OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US .	47
VII.	THE TROGLODYTES . . .	57
VIII.	PEACE AND WAR ON A SUNDAY .	65
IX.	A DAY AND A NIGHT ON THE DEEP	75
X.	A NIGHTMARE	85
XI.	THE HEALING MEDICINE OF MIRTH	93
XII.	A "MAKE AND MEND" . .	105
XIII.	A PREVIOUS ATTEMPT . .	115

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

View from the Foretop during Action *Frontispiece*

FACING PAGE

The Captain comes on Board at Hong-Kong 4

Hong-Kong Dockyard. Where the Triumph refitted after Tsingtau . 14

Some Guns and Some Gunners . . 24

Wearing her Honours 38

A Few Shell Splinters. The Damaged Maintop 48

The Bandmaster in the "Shades of Nelson" 58

The Sunday Service 66

"The Last Volleys are Fired" . . 70

A Burial at Sea 88

Officer-Artistes at a Concert on Board 106

Map of the Dardanelles . . . 124

On a midnight in midwinter when all but the winds were dead,
"The meek shall inherit the earth" was a Scripture that rang thro' his head,
Till he dream'd that a voice of the Earth went wailingly past him and said :

"I am losing the light of my Youth
And the Vision that led me of old,
And I clash with an iron Truth
When I make for an Age of gold,
And I would that my race were run,
For teeming with liars, and madmen, and knaves,
And wearied of Autocrats, Anarchs, and Slaves,
And darken'd with doubts of a Faith that saves,
And crimson with battles, and hollow with graves,
To the wail of my winds and the moan of my waves
I whirl, and I follow the Sun."

THE DREAMER.

IN CLASSIC WATERS

I

IN CLASSIC WATERS

> Squadrons and squares of men in brazen plates,
> Scaffolds, still sheets of water, divers woes,
> Ranges of glimmering vaults with iron grates,
> And hushed seraglios.

THERE are many well-remembered dates in history. The nineteenth of February, 1915, will henceforth be numbered with them. It was the day when the Allied Fleet first showed itself to the gunners in the forts at the entrance to the Dardanelles.

Speedily and secretly, from the corners of the four seas, this host of grey monsters had assembled, guided to their rendezvous by mysterious messages caught up from the ether—messages quite unintelligible to any save those whom they concerned.

On the morning of February 19 I first saw Seddul Bahr and Kum Kali from the

quarter-deck of a battleship. Obedient to those weird "burs and buzzes" of wireless telegraphy, H. M. S. Triumph had steamed some thousands of miles from her work in the China seas. She had remained in the Suez Canal for a time, standing by in case of need, but the ignominious flight of the Turks had set her free for greater deeds, and every mother's son of the 790 men who manned her rejoiced when she steamed through the canal to join the flag of Vice-Admiral Carden off the Dardanelles.

A Pageant of Empire

The canal banks were lined with men. It was a veritable pageant of empire. Besides the Egyptian troops, there were sturdy Australians, and New Zealanders who greeted us with strange Maori war cries. There were swarthy Indians whose cries were even stranger, and who emulated their white brothers in an attempt to dance to the music of our band.

THE CAPTAIN COMES ON BOARD AT HONG-KONG.

Everywhere there were signs of war. On each hand the desert was honeycombed with trenches, and every few miles we passed a large encampment. Merchant ships had their bridges protected with sand-bags. The Hardinge bore upon her the marks of a recent engagement, her foremost funnel having been shot away. The once graceful Minerva was recognizable in spite of an attempt to paint her like a futurist picture of the Sahara.

We left all this behind, and shortly found ourselves numbered with the vast fleet upon whose operations so much depends. There to the eastward lay the historic Hellespont, a strip of water round which centres to-day greater interests than those which in ancient times gave to it its classic fame. Here, between Sestos and Abydos, Xerxes crossed in 480 B.C. to enter Europe. Alexander crossed a century and a half later to enter Asia. What of that? True, both events had great effect in history, but neither can compare in importance with the present

enterprise of forcing the Narrows between those two points, now better known as Kilid Bahr and Chanak.

The "First Castles" of Europe and Asia

As we approach from the Archipelago the objects that first attract the eye are the "first castles" of Europe and Asia. The former, called by the Turks Set el Bahr, "the barrier of the sea," is situated at the extremity of the old Thracian Chersonesus, and is supposed to be built out of the ruins of the ancient Eleus. The tomb of Protesilaus is identified in a mound near the castle. On the Asiatic shore is Kum Kali, "sand castle," near which is the little town of Yeni Shehir. The reputed tombs of Achilles and Patroclus can be seen beyond the castle. But one forgets the legendary associations of Troy and its heroes as one comes into contact with the grim reality of its modern fortifications. A few weeks ago each

promontory bristled with heavy guns in numerous forts, and, even beyond the entrance, both shores right up to the Narrows were dotted with movable batteries and howitzers. This, to say nothing of the lines of mines laid across the channel, and the torpedo-tubes operated from the shores, gives some idea of the vastness of the undertaking with which the Allied Fleet was confronted on February 19.

THE FORE-CROSS PASSAGE

II

THE FORE-CROSS PASSAGE

The armourers, accomplishing the knights,
With busy hammers, closing rivets up,
Give dreadful note of preparation.

Clearing for Action

"Wash clothes as convenient this afternoon. All men are to wear clean clothes and flannels to-morrow." Simple words signalled from the flagship, but to the men in blue they are ominous. They mean that the morrow is a day of battle, when shells will be flying about, when jagged splinters of hot steel may cut and crush and kill. Clean clothes, so the surgeons say, have saved the life of many a wounded man; dirty ones inevitably lead to septic complications.

The morning dawned clear and calm, an ideal day for such an unideal task.

Yonder, just out of range, the forts showed up in the sunlight. The great day had come. The men were ready. There were a few preliminary, precautionary measures to be taken. Any vulnerable part of the ship had to be protected by sand-bags. Hammocks had to be packed here and there to prevent shell splinters striking men who must be exposed. As the bugles sounded "Action," a cheer resounded along the mess-decks, and in each ship men went to their battle stations.

In peace time the evolution known as "General Quarters," or more familiarly as "G. Q's.," is practised regularly. Each man has his task and each does it with cheery zeal and amazing precision. Decks are speedily cleared. Hoses are rigged to keep a running stream of water over the woodwork and thus minimize the possibility of fire. Watertight doors are shut, but not before the surgeons and their attendants have moved the sick from the "Sick Bay" into a place of

safety below armour, and taken their instruments and stretchers to their station. The guns' crews are in their turrets and casemates, the control officers have climbed into the foretop, the ammunition supply parties find their way to the magazines, half a dozen men take their places in the Transmission Station. Somewhere, hidden in the heart of the ship, the "black squad" are stoking their furnaces. Engineers, electricians, carpenters, and armourers, each man has his post, and gets there in less time than it takes to describe.

It was my business to accompany the medical party. February 19 was the first occasion on which I had heard "General Quarters" sounded in earnest. I was one of the few men in the Triumph who had not been in action before. Since then those bugle notes have become quite familiar. Day after day the Triumph, in company with other battleships, has bombarded the forts, sometimes at long range, sometimes within 1,500

yards, and the deafening roar of her guns has ceased to be a novelty.

* * *

The "Fore-Cross Passage," where the medical party is stationed in action, takes on a new importance at this time. Let me describe it. One descends innumerable iron ladders, and eventually, under what is called the "belt-deck" (i.e. surrounded by an armoured belt), one reaches the magazines, well below the water-line. It is hot, crowded, dark, and stuffy. One sits on an ammunition case, tucks up one's legs, and watches. The ammunition passages, looking like dimly lighted tunnels, run fore and aft. An overhead rail takes the heavy projectiles from their bins to the ammunition hoists, which carry them to the guns above by mechanical power.

The First Gun

Great Scott! What is that? A noise which no cunning arrangement of vowels and consonants can convey. For a mo-

HONG-KONG DOCKYARD. WHERE THE TRIUMPH REFITTED AFTER TSINGTAU.

ment the whole ship trembles, and even we, buried here, hear the faint wail gradually dying away. The Triumph has fired the first gun! We shall get used to it in time, but the first shot "fired in anger" is curiously memorable.

Now the supply parties have all their work to do in carrying out orders. Half stripped, yet sweating, they send up as ordered "10″ ordinary," "7·5″ lyddite," "Half charges cordite on the port side." To-day there is a heavy demand for 10″ shells, and more have to be hauled by pulley from the lower magazines. "Volunteers wanted!" shouts an officer, and immediately a dozen willing hands from the disengaged side of the ship are helping to trundle the heavy projectiles to the ammunition hoists.

Then there is a lull, and the supply party have time for a "breather." Some improve the occasion by writing a message on the shells they have prepared for the hoist. Here is a wit who, in bold chalk capitals, indites a greeting to the Sultan

on a 10″ projectile. Another contents himself with a caricature of a Turk with an enormous fez and very baggy trousers. " One fer 'is nob " I see inscribed on one shell, and on another the device, " 'Ope it 'its yer 'ard," and again, " Put this in yer bags."

The Transmission Station

That queer box-like structure is the " Transmission Station." It is the very brain of the ship. In it six men or more sit in the midst of a complicated array of voice-pipes, electrical indicators, and navy-phones, and convey to different parts of the ship the instructions that come down from the foretop.

Yonder on the port side there is a group playing " bosun's bridge " with some very grubby cards. Under the lamp is a youngster reading with evident interest a scrap of newspaper seven weeks old. On my right a sick-bay steward snores in sleep with a 7·5″ lyddite shell for a

pillow. The staff-surgeon, divested of his white coat, is carrying on a subdued argument with the paymaster on the subject of ventilation—a most apposite subject. Over and above it all is the distant boom of guns from the forts and the other ships, and at regular intervals the crash of our own broadsides and the thunder of our turrets. Round us we hear the bursting of shells as they strike the water short of us, and occasionally the rattle of splinters as they crash into our armour.

At the Wheel

In action the steering-gear is connected up with the fore-cross passage, and one hears the man at the wheel repeating in nautical sing-song tones the instructions conveyed to him by voice-pipe from the navigating officer in the conning-tower, "Starboard 10, sir," "Starboard 15, sir," "Helm to midships, sir." I go and peep at the compass, and find we are now

heading south-west. I realize we are steaming out of the channel, and am glad to think there will be a short "Stand easy," when one can stretch a leg and smoke a pipe, and perhaps get a hurried meal.

From the depths of the ship we hear the bugles sounding the "Cease Fire," strange notes that seem, almost reluctantly, to say, "Let 'em alone! Let 'em alone!" Shortly comes the order, "Return all cordite." It is returned to the magazines for safety. Then the "Secure" is sounded, and one takes one's turn in the procession up the ladders, anxious to see what damage we have received, and to thank God for daylight and fresh air again.

HELL'S GATES

III

HELL'S GATES

Shrine of the mighty ! Can it be
That this is all remains of thee ?

On the first day of the bombardment of the Dardanelles, the Triumph received instructions to shell the forts at Cape Tekel from the north-west. This having been accomplished, she proceeded, in the afternoon, to reconnoitre the shore north of Cape Helles, and to open fire with 7·5″ guns on the trenches and field works that disputed the landing of the Marines who were to complete the demolition of the guns.

A Spectacular Scene

As we returned to the flagship in the evening, we witnessed what must have been one of the most spectacular scenes in naval

history. Imagine it. The sun is setting over the hills on the Asiatic shore. The air is perfectly clear, and the limpid sea outside the entrance is coloured, in patches, every shade of blue and green and yellow. From the south the French battleships are using their turrets with great effect upon the forts beyond Kum Kali. The Vengeance and Cornwallis proudly steam to and fro, discharging salvos into the forts on Cape Graeco, the most southern point on the European shore. We see the flashes of the heavy guns of the Turkish forts as they reply to the onslaught. The Agamemnon approaches, and soon her broadsides blaze out and her projectiles begin to fall with telling accuracy round the spot where her legendary namesake attacked the forces of King Priam. Lying in the distance is the Inflexible, doing some excellent long-range shooting. The Queen Elizabeth, stately and terrible, back on the horizon there, occasionally makes her presence felt by a well-directed shot from her fifteen-inch guns.

It is difficult to give any adequate impression of the scene. The constant flash of guns, followed by their roar and thunder, the strange shrieking of projectiles hurtling through the air, the gigantic fountains of water raised when the shots fall short, the almost equally large columns of earth, cement, and stone when the ships' shells find a target in and about the forts. The ancient history of the place strengthens its appeal to the imagination. What scenes of war have these hills in the Troad witnessed in the past! What strange ships have sailed these waters! Yet never before such warfare, never before such a fleet as this!

Deliberate Fire at Close Range

The rough weather necessitated some delay before the reduction of the forts at the entrance could be completed. After a few unpleasant days patrolling in heavy seas, the opportunity came.

With ships at long range supporting

them, the Vengeance and Cornwallis made a run into the channel and subjected the forts to a further bombardment. A second run was made by two ships of the French squadron. On each occasion the ships were embarrassed by the fire of field-guns and movable batteries which had been brought up during the bad weather.

Finally the Triumph and Albion were directed to complete the destruction of the guns by deliberate fire at close range. They steamed in to two thousand yards and were able to get direct hits at the guns not already disabled. Five hundred yards closer ! One sees with the naked eye the debris and desolation. As each shell falls, a volcano of bricks and stone and earth flies high into the air. A terrific explosion echoing through the hills indicates a magazine blown up. Fires break out at various points. As the smoke and dust of exploding shells is carried away by the wind from the sea, the awful effect of the heavy bombardment is revealed : maimed and twisted guns, roofless shelters

SOME GUNS AND SOME GUNNERS.

torn with gaping holes, sheets of armour bent and ripped, ruined buildings.

There was little else to do that day, save the comparatively merciful task of destroying the searchlights at Seddul Bahr. As the ships withdrew they received a signal from the flagship: "Albion and Triumph. You have been shooting very well. I congratulate you."

The Forts in Flames

Darkness draws on, and the Allied Fleet steam out in station, an imposing grey line. Astern in the distance two huge fires are burning; the forts on each shore are in flames, and silhouetted against the horrible blaze one sees shattered masonry, tottering buildings, a burning barracks, a blackened tower.

It is evident that, on the European shore, the Turks are systematically completing the work begun by their enemies' guns. No shell has fallen near the lighthouse, but from its windows dense black

clouds of smoke emerge, and round its base the savage flames lick the white stones with the lust of destruction.

The whole fort and the adjoining village are ablaze, lighting up the sky and casting weird reflexions. Throughout the night the conflagration continues, making the entrance to the Dardanelles look like the gateway of hell. Magnificent but terrible, for who can forget that beneath those charred ruins there lie the bodies of men, men made for better things than this ?

THE "PRESS BUREAU"

IV

THE "PRESS BUREAU"

That night a child might understand
The De'il had business on his hand.

The Fleet in a Storm

There have been several days when the weather has made it impossible to carry on the bombardment of the forts and batteries. The wind changed round to the southward and increased to a full gale with terrific squalls. It was bad enough in the day time; at night, with darkened ship, it was worse.

At 5 p.m. one day the Triumph was ordered to send her duty steamboat to the flagship. The ship was rolling badly, and as the boat was lowered, her funnel was down lest she should come foul of the slings. As soon as she took the water she

shipped a sea which almost put out her fires. Steam went back, and she drifted helplessly in the trough of the sea.

The Albion, returning from coaling, saw her plight, and was about to steer towards her and give her a line, when her engines started and away she went. It looked every minute as if she would capsize, but she pluckily accomplished her mission, and eventually returned. By means of oil-bags and by manœuvring the ship to make a lee, she was at last hoisted.

A Floating Mine ?

We went to sea that night in a regular hurricane. Huge seas were breaking over the fo'c'sle and we were rolling heavily. Sitting in the wardroom after supper, about 9 o'clock, we heard a terrific thud and the sound of rushing water which soon flooded the half-deck and swished about our feet. Heavens ! What could it be ? The ship of course was darkened

and we were all battened down. Every one jumped up confident that we had struck a mine, a belief that seemed confirmed by reason of the ship having an obvious list to starboard. Investigations proved our fears to be groundless. A heavy hatch, too heavy for one man to lift, had been struck by a sea as we were coming round to the wind, and had been closed by *force majeure*.

It was an awful night. The navigating officer on the bridge must have found it difficult to keep station with the fleet. For my part I lay, tossed hither and thither in my bunk, and sympathized with St. Paul, who had similar trouble in these waters. Like him I found "Euroclydon" most unpleasant. Like him I prayed for the dawn.

The morning was smiling and pleasant. The elements appeared amused at their joke at our expense, but they seemed determined to give us another opportunity in the Dardanelles. In the afternoon the ships took up their positions for

bombarding, and our ship's company went to action stations.

* * *

During our enforced inaction the medical party had arranged with the Transmission Station officers what subsequently became known as the "Press Bureau." Let me explain.

Two or three hours hidden away in the bowels of a ship are never pleasant, and still less so when one knows that up above things of surpassing interest are happening each minute. To hear the crash of shells around and not to know their effect is trying to the nerves. It is no less trying to hear the cannonade of the ship's guns and not to know *their* effect.

Now the "Press Bureau" keeps us supplied with bulletins whenever the control officers in the foretop can spare a moment's thought for the "submerged tenth." Between the instructions to the gunlayers which the Transmission Station

passes on to the respective casemates, one gets bits of description. The rosy face of a midshipman appears from the trap-door at intervals with such morsels of information as the following: "Last shot short." Then a pause. Again the head appears. "Last shot a hit;" and then after a pause, "Large explosion in the fort. Probably a magazine blown up."

The word would be passed along the lines and would be greeted by a muffled cheer. Then again, "Shore battery guarding minefield opened up on mine-sweepers." Ho! Ho! "Dublin and Amethyst have engaged battery and landed a shell in the middle of it." Hurray! Another interval, and then from the trap-door would come the information, "Two shells just burst twenty-five yards short of us." . . . "We're hit!" . . . "Six-inch plodge through our quarter-deck." . . . "Hit again on starboard beam—picket boat smashed up." Whew! Then there would be no time for further messages. We knew that the "men that mattered"

in the foretop had all their wits employed in bringing the Triumph's broadside to bear upon some particularly energetic battery which had made a target of us. And so it goes on day after day.

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

V

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

Then the pilots of the place put out brisk and leapt on board ;
" Why, what hope or chance have ships like these to pass ? " laughed they :
" Rocks to starboard, rocks to port, all the passage scarred and scored."

Across the Narrows, between the ancient Sestos and Abydos, Leander is said to have swum nightly to visit Hero. In 1810 Lord Byron performed a similar feat. Legend does not tell us the object of his excursion.

From the bridge of the Triumph, as she approached to join in the bombardment of Fort Dardanus, the view of the Narrows would almost lead one to believe that an ordinary swimmer could accomplish Leander's task with ease. It looks scarcely a mile between the promontories. But the current at that point is of great force,

and doubtless the swimmers deserved all the praise they got.

The Triumph steamed in, in station, astern of the Albion. Further up the channel three other battleships were already within range and had opened fire on the forts of Kilid Bahr and Chanak. These forts were clearly visible to us. One could see the coloured roofs of the buildings on the hill sides, relieved here and there by an oriental dome or minaret. A fire was observed to have broken out in Chanak. Whether it was the result of a ship's projectile or of a bomb dropped by the aeroplane circling overhead it was impossible to say.

It would be interesting to know how the people of Chanak regarded these proceedings. In the following chapter I give the impressions of one who was in Chanak at the time.

The Narrows

In a famous old book, known to navigators of a past generation, the Narrows

WEARING HER HONOURS.

are thus described. "Four leagues within the first castles the channel is contracted by a promontory on each shore to two thousand seven hundred yards, and this strait is properly the Dardanelles. On each promontory there is a castle. The cape on the European side is the ancient Cynossema, on which was the tomb of Hecuba. The castle on it is called the second castle of Europe, and by the Turks, Kelidar Bahr, the Padlock of the Sea. The second castle of Asia is known as Sultania Kalessi, the Sultana's castle, and vulgarly Chanak Kalessi, the Castle of Pottery, from the quantity of fragments of pottery found near it. Close to it is a town of four thousand inhabitants, chiefly Jews, who live by supplying ships passing with provisions. The ancient Rhodius, an insignificant torrent, washes the walls of the second castle of Asia on the south."

As the Allied Fleet approaches the Narrows now, it is not only the armed castles that dispute its passage. Clus-

tered round Kilid Bahr there is a formidable array of forts pointing their heavy guns upon the approaching enemy. The armament of Chanak opposite is but slightly less, but perhaps her position makes an enemy's attack more difficult.

As the Triumph picks up her station just beyond the village of Aren Kioi, Kephez point juts out spoiling the full view of the town of Chanak. Beyond Kephez, in Sari Siglar Bay, lies the wreck of the Turkish battleship Messodieh, a victim of the plucky B11. Lines of mines across the channel block the passage, but while the forts are engaged in an attempt to repulse the approaching battleships, the intrepid mine-sweepers are ploughing a channel through those treacherous obstacles. Strange that these mighty battleships should be so dependent upon a few North Sea trawlers; yet in this enterprise the hidden mines constitute an all-important factor in the campaign, and no praise is too high for those

courageous souls who, with their lives in their hands, man the mine-sweepers.

Fort Dardanus

To-day, after a heavy bombardment, Fort Dardanus is silenced. At first the ships received a heavy fire from its guns, the batteries on the crest of the hill being difficult to locate. The Triumph was not the only battleship that suffered from their shells; the Albion has been hit between the after-funnel and the main-mast. A shell has pierced the Triumph's quarter-deck; another has damaged the gun-room. As we drew out of range we rushed to examine our wounds. Though the debris was plentiful, the damage was but slight. Luckily one of the shells burst the bathroom water-pipes, and the floods of water prevented a fire! The Captain's cabin will be habitable again to-morrow. Already the ship's carpenters are busy with timber and tow and tar. The middies may find their quarters

draughty for some time, but worse things happen at sea!

A Fearful and Wonderful Scene

We reached the entrance in time to behold a fearful and wonderful scene. A demolition party had been landed to complete the destruction of the guns on the Asiatic shore. Through our glasses we see the men clambering over the ruins of the gun emplacements. They press in the gun-cotton. We see them retire to a safe range before the charges are exploded. What a sight! What a crash! Explosion after explosion as gun after gun is blown to pieces. A flash, a huge column of black smoke streaked with glowing flame, a series of terrific roars and rumblings. The very earth seems to quake and to impart its tremors to the water. Hurtling through the air come huge masses of metal and masonry. Great fragments fall into the trembling sea, studding its surface with numerous geysers,

some so near to the ship that we are shifted to a more safe position.

Stillness once more, save for the shrill cries of frightened gulls which wildly circle off the coast. Over the ruins and desolation a huge cloud of smoke hangs like a pall. The marines emerge from their cover and hurry to the waiting boats. Steam pinnaces tow them back to their ships. They have done their work.

OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US

VI

OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US

O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us !

. . . .

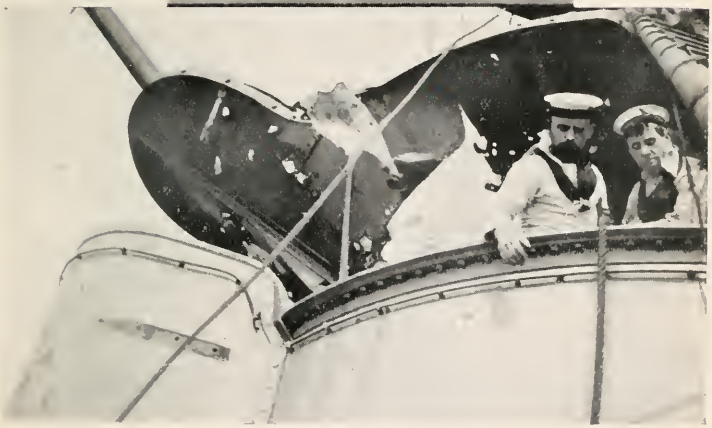
If there's a hole in a' your coats,
I rede ye tent it ;
A chiel's amang ye takin' notes,
And, faith, he'll prent it !

In the last chapter I mentioned the bombardment of the forts at Kilid Bahr and Chanak by a number of battleships simultaneously with the attack of the Albion and Triumph at Fort Dardanus. The special correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung* at the Dardanelles, writing from Chanak Kale, describes the terrible effect of the bombardment of the allied men-of-war. He relates how he was sitting in a café, when there was an ear-splitting report, caused by the explosion near by

of a shell from a man-of-war. "Then, without delay," he writes, with unconscious humour, in the manner of Pepys, "to the fort to a safer point of observation." The journey cannot have been agreeable, for the narrative proceeds :

"The thunder of the guns becomes louder every minute, the very air quivers and houses totter. The smashing of window-glass and the rattle of the iron roller blinds of the shops show that the shells are flying over the town. Do the English wish to bombard the unfortunate town, and destroy the, for the most part modest, dwellings of the inhabitants who have long been in a place of safety ? Shall the town which still bears traces of the great earthquake of 1912 be reduced to a rubbish heap ? " The correspondent does not mention whether the Allies' shells fulfilled his speculations regarding the town, but he is much more specific regarding the conditions in the fort.

He remarks complacently that the two sentries at the entrance standing in their



A FEW SHELL SPLINTERS.
THE DAMAGED MAINTOP.

boxes saluted as usual even on such a day, but he seems to have suffered some disappointment regarding the observation post which he had in his mind, for he says: "It is hardly advisable to ascend the tower to-day; it is all too good a mark, and shells are flying to the right and left of it. There seems to be no place in or near the fort from which one can watch the fight with any degree of security. The increasing hail of shells and the apparent concentration of the fire on the ground around the tower oblige us to think of cover."

Search for Cover

Declining the invitation of Turkish soldiers to share their shelter, the correspondent and his companions took refuge behind a wall, and their doubts as to its protective capacity were soon confirmed by a shower of stones and rubbish and the acrid fumes of explosives. "Our wall," the writer proceeds, "was indeed

unharmed, but we saw well enough that it would be no protection for us. Yet where, for twenty kilometres round, was there any spot from which we should be able to laugh at these death-vomiting shells? An artillery officer assured us that the best place was in one of the mighty holes that the shells made in the ground, as the experience of many generations of artillerymen had shown that such holes possessed no attraction for other shells.

"But then, if the contrary had happened, our friendly counsellor might have argued that we were simply 'the exception that proved the rule.'" The correspondent's party had no wish to run the risk of "proving the rule" in this way, so they took refuge in a passage leading to the inner courtyard of the fort, where they ruminated on the horrors of war and grieved over the fact that on such a beautiful spring day, given to humanity for life's enjoyment, men should be shooting at men with such murderous projectiles.

From these considerations they were rudely brought back once more to horrid reality by a terrific detonation close by. "The gigantic walls," says the correspondent, "which for 450 years had stood all the storms and stress of time, and seemed to have been built for eternity, heaved, and great lumps of earth and stone hurtled over us, and we saw that here, too, we possessed no safe shelter." Moreover, the party suddenly realized that from where they were they could see nothing of the fight, so they decided to make for the hospital hill. The writer admits that the mile and three-quarters thither was not one of the pleasantest walks in his life, for the fire of the ships seemed suddenly to turn in the direction in which they were going. Scarcely, too, had they left the fort behind them, when a shell struck an adjacent bakery, the ruined walls of which fell within twenty paces of them.

A Hellish Din

On reaching the open they found that the nine ships they had counted at the beginning of the attack had now grown to fourteen, including the Queen Elizabeth and other "stately and heavily armed vessels." "I do not deny," proceeds the correspondent, "that the employment of these great and powerful vessels shook my confidence in an outcome of the undertaking in our favour, for it showed an intention to carry the thing through with the strongest and most effective means. The enemy squadron manœuvred as usual. The ships steamed into the bay, fired their guns, and in their further course described an ellipse until, followed in turn by the other vessels, they came into the firing-line.

"It was a hellish din, and the shells flew in all directions—towards Dardanus, the howitzer batteries on the European side, as well as towards Forts Medjidieh and Hamidieh. We were now able to watch

the firing almost in complete safety, and I was glad to see how many of these heavy and costly projectiles fell wide of their mark." The correspondent imagines the sinking of the Bouvet, Irresistible, and Ocean (which he mentions without in any way describing) to have been due, not to mines, of which he says not a word, but to the fire of the forts.

As regards the other British battleships alleged to have been hit by the forts, however, he admits that no permanent damage was done to them, "but," he concludes, evidently with an eye to the possibility of his words reaching British readers, and with the wish to contribute his little to the German attempts to sow mistrust between the Allies, "it is sufficient to delay the operations, and will make the English realize that they are staking a great deal, and must be prepared for further considerable losses if they mean to go on with their efforts to throw open the Dardanelles solely in the interests of Russia and her development into a Mediterranean Power."

THE TROGLODYTES

VII

THE TROGLODYTES

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concourse of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils :
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus.
Let no such man be trusted.

THE bluejacket loves a concert. In peace time, even if he be numbered among the small minority who cannot contribute to its programme, he will not be happy unless at least once a month he can share with his messmates the joy of a rousing chorus. A ship's concert has a flavour of its own. There are always the humorous, pathetic, and melodramatic notes. No ship's concert ever yet lacked at least one item of a vaguely lugubrious character.

Normally the " sing-song " is a splendid affair, worked up in odd times for a con-

siderable period before it appears on the boards. When the day comes, during the dog watches, willing carpenters will be found rigging a stage on the quarter-deck. Electric light effects are skilfully arranged by the "L.T.O.," the leading torpedo man, in whose province all electrical matters lie. In every ship will be found some budding artist who can paint a scene, and it is amazing what wealth of theatrical properties lie concealed in men's chests. It is beyond me to describe the skill, the humour, the good spirit and the knowledge of human nature revealed in a certain two-act farce entitled "The Shades of Nelson" which I once saw acted on the Triumph's quarter-deck. And, mark you, it was written, staged, rigged, and painted by lower-deck hands.

Jack is invariably a musician of sorts. Mandoline, banjo, concertina, and even violin have their votaries in every ship. Failing all else, the mouth-organ makes a cheerful noise.

Under war routine, when at sunset the

THE BANDMASTER IN THE "SHADES OF NELSON."

ship is darkened, such lavish musical treats are not possible. At the order "Darken ship" all deadlights are closed that no gleam may penetrate the scuttles, casemates are closed in, deck lights are covered with iron hatches. No one may even strike a match on deck. He must light his pipe by means of the smouldering rope-end hidden in the bucket. Yet, even so, the matlow's musical soul must express itself. Jack must have his concert, and he finds a way.

A Sing-song in "B" Casemate

"We are having a little sing-song in 'B' casemate to-night, sir. Can you come?"

Rather! Who would miss it?

It has been a busy day. We are patrolling during the night. "Night defence" has been sounded long ago, and men are at their stations. About 8.30 some officers find their way from the wardroom to the darkened deck. Gradually,

as one's eyes get used to the gloom, it is possible to grope along through the battery. One barks one's shins, perhaps, against an ammunition case, and narrowly avoids falling down a hatch into the inky darkness below. Mercifully no one trips across a spitkid, but there is every danger of stumbling into a group of men as they squat there in the darkness yarning. From a distance we hear the muffled sounds of "Thora," without which no ship's concert could be complete. Eventually we arrive at the appointed casemate, and are led in by the bandmaster, who has been on the look out for us.

It takes a minute to grasp the strange sight within—to focus things. What a spectacle is lit up by the light of a solitary candle lamp! Is it a cave? Are those stalactites? No. Eighty men sitting, standing, squatting, crouching round the iron walls of a gun casemate. Some are hanging on to the ammunition rack. Some are sitting on the breech of a 7·5″ gun. It might be a congregation of primitive

Christians hiding in a catacomb. It might be a public meeting of Troglodytes. It is, in fact, a handful of a ship's company "standing easy," met together to cheer their spirits by mutual song.

"The Count"

We can distinguish now the forms of the men, in every state of *négligé*. One gets a glimpse of their healthy faces as they come occasionally within range of the flickering light. Some are shaven. Many are engaged in the inartistic process of growing beards (a practice fashionable in war time). Some have passed that miserable period and can boast of a fine, bushy growth. The atmosphere is already heavy with the smoke of their "service plug." Near the door a few chairs have been considerately placed for the officers. In the middle of the strange circle squats the bandmaster, by courtesy known as "the Count." He it is who calls upon the artists, whose names he has previously

set out on a grubby piece of paper. He skilfully restrains the over-eager, tactfully encourages the hesitating. He arranges with the concertina men as to keys and accompaniment. A worthy fellow, the Count. His splendid beard is surmounted by a moustache which out-does the Kaiser's in its delicate curve. He sings an excellent song himself, he wears a perpetual smile, and possesses an unruffled temper —an asset to any ship's company.

We applaud the songs, as is meet. We join in the chorus when we can. As the clouds of tobacco smoke increase in density the picture becomes more eerie than ever. The air is close, unbreathable, but the noise is good, wholesome, invigorating.

Hark! The notes of a bugle. "Out Pipes!" A general exodus—some to hammocks, others to bunks. We shall sleep well, and to-morrow's action will be no worse for such a night.

PEACE AND WAR ON A SUNDAY

VIII

PEACE AND WAR ON A SUNDAY

Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands ;
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships and praying hands ;
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song.

SUNDAY—but no day of rest. No time to-day for "church." No time, that is, for the ship's company to muster for the usual service on the quarter-deck or in the battery. In the early hours, of course, there has been a simple celebration of Holy Communion. A little group of officers and men, "such as can be spared from the necessary service of the ship," have knelt round that flag-covered Altar, have gazed perchance at the emblem of the Crucified, lit by the flickering candle on either side. They have received into their rope-

hardened hands the Bread of Life, and into their souls the strength, if need be, for sacrifice. They have bowed their heads as the celebrant makes the holy sign, and blesses them in God's name—" The Peace of God which passeth all understanding keep your hearts and minds."

The Peace of God ? And in an hour the flash and roar of battle ! Is it a mockery to speak of a divine peace at such a time ? You who would mock be silent. They know.

* * *

In a lovely mountain-girdled valley, at the head of a gulf running forty-six miles inland from the Aegean sea, stands Smyrna, the most important seaport in Asia Minor. The city nestles at the foot, and climbs up the slopes, of a steep hill at the south-east corner of the gulf. It is crowned by the ruins of the ancient Acropolis. Traces of the old walls are visible, and ruins of the stadium, the theatre, and some temples can be discerned. Seven hundred years before Christ it was one of

THE SUNDAY SERVICE.

the most important trading-places of Anatolia, and to-day, not only does it boast its commercial supremacy, but it is also an important railway centre with busy iron foundries and machinery works.

Its harbour is well protected by the heavy guns of Fort Hamidieh, which juts out into the sea at the entrance. Along the southern shore, at Paleo Tabir and westward of it, batteries threaten the approach of an enemy ship. Not without good reason was the bombardment of the forts of Smyrna described as a necessary incident in the larger enterprise of forcing the Dardanelles.

Fort Hamidieh Hotly Engaged

The Triumph was one of the battleships engaged there under the flag of Vice-Admiral Sir R. H. Pierse, Commander-in-Chief of the East India Squadron. Fort Hamidieh had been bombarded with evident success at a range of 14,000 yards. To-day, Sunday, it must be engaged at

a much closer range, and the battery at Paleo Tabir must also be attacked.

The bombardment had not been long in progress, when suddenly other batteries along the coast, hidden in the olive groves, opened fire. The Triumph, which was closest inshore, found herself under the fire of four batteries at once. A hail of shells was falling all around her, whipping up the sea into great columns of water which deluged her decks.

While the squadron was being so disposed that each ship might engage a different battery, a shell burst on our shelter-deck, another made a jagged hole in our after-funnel, another struck the pedestal of a fourteen-pounder on the bridge. There was a terrific crash, a blinding flash, a rain of splinters, the fumes of burning hammocks, making it difficult for the officers in the conning-tower to carry on. Yet through it all commands were calmly given and obeyed, and soon the ships' broadsides and turrets were trained on the respective positions.

The enemy's fire became slower, more erratic, and eventually ceased.

A Shell

In the midst of that *mêlée* there comes a message to the medical party. "Shell burst in X casemate. Send assistance." Shell burst in a casemate! God help them! In such a confined space there can be little hope for any one.

The surgeons are already on their way, having a very unpleasant minute as they pick their way across the exposed deck. The fumes and dust have scarcely cleared away. A great gash is visible in the roof of the casemate. Fortunately the shell burst before entering, so the casualties are remarkably few. One poor fellow is seriously wounded, two others only slightly, and the latter assure the doctors they can carry on.

The unconscious lad, a midshipman, is tenderly bandaged, and the stretcher party carry him below where he can be

attended with less risk. The doctors do all that is possible, but there is little chance. He is still unconscious. The Chaplain kneels by his side and says the last prayers of the Church on his behalf, and commends his departing soul to God. The attendants bare their heads. Amen. He is gone.

Still the roar and crash of death go on above us. A few hours, and in some sheltered bay the lad's remains are committed to the deep with a warrior's honours. The last volleys are fired. The "Last Post" sounds. Another name on the nation's Roll of Honour. God rest him. Another mother bereaved of her son. God comfort her.

The Men in the Casemates

With all its damage and death, and the anguish and anxiety that follow in its wake, no one could like war for its own sake. True, there are times, and this is pre-eminently one, when war is a neces-

"THE LAST VOLLEYS ARE FIRED."

sity; but it must ever be a regrettable necessity. Sailors, no less than soldiers, regard it as such. But they realize that, in such times as these, the road to peace must be hewn with the sword, and if they find a certain joy in the arts of war, the vision of future peace inspires it.

"The fiercer the fight, the shorter the war." That is their motto. How often have I heard brave men, talking in groups on the darkened decks, speaking of their homes, their wives and children, and longing for the day when they will see them again. I have seen those same men exhilarated with joy as they note the damaging effect of their heavy projectiles, for they know that by such means each day brings peace and home nearer.

People in England! rightly do you think of "the men in the trenches." The phrase has become a simile for hardship and determined endurance. Think too, sometimes, of "the men in the case-mates," the men who are spending these days and nights in the iron trenches along

the broadsides of our battleships. Their lot has its peculiar difficulties and dangers, and it gives them confidence and courage to know that the "folk at home" think of them and say an occasional prayer for them.

A DAY AND A NIGHT ON THE DEEP

IX

A DAY AND A NIGHT ON THE DEEP

> There would be neither music nor star ;
> But the wave would make music above us afar—
> Low thunder and light in the magic night,
> Neither moon nor star.

Each morning upon the mantelshelf in the wardroom, sticking out of a curious bamboo vase, which recalls one's thoughts to China, a packet of cotton-wool is to be found. Each officer, as he drops in to breakfast, tears off a piece and places it in his pocket. A strange bit of ritual, yet nowadays it excites no comment. That wool is useful. It has been placed there by the staff-surgeon. When the bugles sound "General Quarters," you will see officers, as they go to their battle stations, extract from their pockets their supply of cotton-wool, roll up small wads, and insert them in their ears. If one has

ever heard the boom of a ten-inch gun, or the ear-splitting bark of a fourteen-pounder, no explanation of this proceeding is necessary. Naval outfitters, I believe, have lately invented a little celluloid device for the protection of the ear during gun-fire. As there are no naval outfitters near, we must fall back upon simpler and less expensive means.

But one must not only guard one's ears from the noise of firing; it is necessary also to keep the teeth parted if standing near the gun.

The Force of a Heavy Gun

It gives some idea of the violence of heavy gun-fire, when one realizes the damage that can be done by the mere blast of air created by the discharge of its projectile. On one occasion, when the Triumph's men were summoned to action stations very hastily, a small ventilator on the quarter-deck was left uncovered. During the engagement it became neces-

sary to fire the guns of the after-turret, trained right aft. The blast sucked out the air from the after-part of the ship, practically creating a vacuum. The damage thus caused was far more than we received that day from the enemy's guns. The cabins of the engineer commander and the paymaster appeared a total wreck. Washstands had come away from their fastenings, rivets were loosened, bulkheads bulged, electric-light fittings had fallen. Water-pipes burst with the strain, and in the contents of the bath-tanks which washed the decks, fragments of wood and plaster floated. A ladder was shaken loose from its hinges and smashed.

Finding the Range

The lenient skipper gave me permission to go into the foretop during the bombardment of Fort Hamidieh at Smyrna. Up that wire ladder to the search-light stage on the foremast, then one clambers up half a dozen iron rungs in the mast and

through a trap-door into the top. There is not much room, yet there are, besides the commander and the gunnery lieutenant, two observation officers, and men at the voice-pipes and range-indicator. The distance from the fort is judged at 14,000 yards. The range is communicated through the Transmission Station to the gunlayers in the turret.

Then the command is given. "Stand by! . . . Fire!!"

The fore-turret beneath our feet is fired. Involuntarily one catches one's breath. The noise is indescribable; the mast, and with it the foretop, vibrates violently; the lurid flash seems for a moment to envelop us all. Rrrrr! The noise does not come within the scope of phonetics—the horrid shriek of the departing shell, crescendo and diminuendo. There is little breeze, and the dirty smoke and the odour of cordite hang in the air. One counts the seconds, and in the distance a huge waterspout indicates that the shell has fallen short of the target.

"Two hundred short and a trifle to the right," remarks the observation officer.

"Range: fourteen, two, nought nought; deflection, fifty left," sings out the gunnery lieutenant, and this is repeated by the man at the voice-pipe. In a moment one hears a voice coming up from the Transmission Station, confirming the range as they set their indicators. "Stand by! . . . Fire!!"

Again the same excruciating experience. The roar, the flash, the vibration, the shriek, the smell, the smoke. The seconds are counted. This time the splash is beyond the fort, which juts out into the sea.

"Hundred over."

For the next shot these ranges are bracketed, and the appearance of a volcano in the fort indicates a hit at 14,100 yards! Now the range is found, and deliberate fire is maintained until the consequent damage to the fort makes an approach to closer range possible.

* * *

We have had supper in peace, well out of range of enemy guns.

"Have some wool, padre; there's going to be some fun to-night."

I am presented by the young doctor with a piece of cotton-wool. I had not expected the news, but the trawlers, under cover of darkness, are to continue to sweep a passage through the mine-field, and the Triumph has received a signal from the flagship to protect them. She is to fire on the search-lights and thus prevent the operations of the mine-sweepers from being revealed to the gunners on the shore.

Nine o'clock. It is a perfectly dark night. No stars, and the moon does not rise till three a.m. The very night for mine-sweeping. Slowly the darkened ship steams to the Pelican Spit buoy, and silently anchors, only a mile from the shore batteries. All the fourteen-pounder guns' crews are at their stations, well supplied with shrapnel. No other ammunition is of use for night firing. Only

the blaze of bursting shrapnel indicates where the shot falls.

The mine-sweepers are creeping in. Suddenly the inky darkness is stabbed by the piercing beam of a search-light. The light slowly revolves, lighting up the sea through a curious green haze.

Bang! Bang, bang!! The guns bark. The light is switched off.

Wait! . . . Look! The shell bursts quite near to the place where a moment before the search-light had appeared. From another point a ribbon of light appears, and again it is darkened as the flash of our guns is seen. They dare only show their lights spasmodically. If they showed them long enough to enable them to find our bearings, or that of the mine-sweepers, they know they would become a good target for the Triumph's shrapnel. This game of flash and bang continues through the night. Meanwhile the plucky trawlers are advancing despite the frequent, though somewhat erratic, fire from the forts.

Before the moon rises, the mine-sweepers have returned, but not without some loss of life. We weigh anchor, clear out of range, and get a little sleep.

A NIGHTMARE

X

A NIGHTMARE

What dreadful noise of waters in mine ears !
What sights of ugly death within mine eyes !

I HAVE heard folks describe an awful nightmare, in which they feel some appalling disaster approaching and find themselves powerless to avert it. Perhaps it is some fierce tyrant or some cruel beast that is about to do them harm, and their feet are glued to the ground. Escape is impossible. They feel if only they could do something the horror would vanish. Invariably they wake up, before the critical moment, to find their heart palpitating with fear, and a nervous perspiration on their brow.

I confess to some such feeling on being suddenly awakened at four o'clock one

morning with the news that a certain ship lying not far distant from us had been torpedoed. The ship in question was an aeroplane parent-ship, carrying, besides aeroplanes, officers and mechanics, a number of sick and wounded who were waiting to be transferred to the hospital ship.

Bad News in the Early Morning

When one is rudely awakened with exciting news, the sudden shock to the mind sometimes produces a state of alertness which enables one to realize in a flash all that is involved in the situation. There rushed through my mind a series of pictures: the sinking ship, the helpless invalids, unable to do anything to save themselves, my friend the young doctor who only went to the ship two days ago. The signal announcing the disaster also stated that the other ships in the squadron were under way. They had lowered their boats to pick up the survivors

and hastily steamed off to avoid a second torpedo.

But what about the Triumph? She was anchored in deep water, off a small island, with a collier made fast alongside. She could not weigh anchor and cut the collier adrift. The collier had not steam up and would certainly drift on to the rocks. We were a splendid target for the next torpedo! True, the ship was darkened, but it was not long till dawn. *Miserere nobis!*

The Concomitant of "Funk"

All this flashed through my mind in less time than it takes to write. In the ward-room opposite my cabin I could hear voices discussing the situation. I joined the group. The decoding officer held the fateful signal in his hand. The engineer lieutenant looked gloomy. Jones made the cheery remark that he expected we should "cop it" at sunrise. Let me be frank. I experienced a strange feeling in

the pit of my stomach, a sort of physical nausea, the concomitant of "funk." You have possibly heard the expression "cold feet." It is a misnomer. A "quivering diaphragm" better describes the sensation. I have since found that my experience was not unique. Indeed I have learned to doubt those people who say they never feel fear, unless, indeed, they have not sufficient intellect to realise danger.

However, there was nothing to do until we were struck, if struck we were to be. I commended myself to God, got back to bed, and, curiously enough, slept. I was awakened by the noise of the anchor being weighed. I switched on the light. Six thirty! Though my cabin was dark by reason of the deadlight over the scuttle, doubtless it was daylight outside. Daylight, and no torpedo! *Deo gratias!* Hooray! We made for another island and coaled in a sheltered bay.

* * *

Later we heard the joyful news that the

A BURIAL AT SEA.

torpedoed ship had not sunk. She was a German prize which had been hastily fitted out as an aeroplane parent-ship. Her cargo of timber had not been removed, and it kept her afloat, in spite of an enormous hole in her starboard bow. I subsequently obtained from the doctor who was on board a graphic account of the adventure. The force of the explosion threw him out of his bunk, and he found the ship was rapidly listing. The lower decks were awash. With the help of some of the officers he succeeded in getting all the sick into the boats. Many of them were lowered in their wooden cots, which had to be sawn away from the bulkheads. The job was not finished till daybreak, and the ship seemed to be slowly settling. Snipers from the shore attempted to prevent the removal of the sick to the boats. The ship's engines were not damaged, and eventually she was able to draw out of range and proceed for repairs.

The incident becomes more interesting

by reason of the fact that it was during an armistice that these events happened. By mutual consent a cessation of hostilities had been arranged until 10 o'clock on the following morning.

A few days later a telegram appeared in Turkish and German papers to the effect that a large British transport had been sunk by a torpedo off that particular island!

THE HEALING MEDICINE OF MIRTH

XI

THE HEALING MEDICINE OF MIRTH

Under the heavy shadow of war's eclipse,
None asks of you to wear a shroud of gloom,
To let the laughter fade upon your lips
Or simulate an air of tragic doom.

Out in the trenches yonder, where they die
For love of country and our common birth,
There, least of all, they cast a jealous eye
Upon the healing medicine of mirth.

"O. S." in *Punch.*

JACK TAR is an incorrigible wag. "Our canteen is doing very well now. I think we shall soon be having turkey for breakfast instead of sausage." The phrase is from a bluejacket's letter home. All the men's letters have to pass the ship's censor, and in the earlier days they were not allowed to reveal the whereabouts of their ship. One would have thought that such a subtle reference to the Dardanelles,

as that mentioned above, might have eluded the vigilance of the censor. Much experience enabled him to see the joke, but no one else save the addressee was likely to understand its meaning. Well, our friend on the lower deck has had his change of diet; though doubtless his palate detects a flavour of sausage in the Turkey. Perhaps it is the stuffing.

Yes, he is a wit. Who else would venture to treat with such scant respect the death-dealing forts with which he is daily confronted? He dubs them with pet names! The forts at Kum Kali will ever be known to him as "Sandy Boy" and "Old Jim," names reminiscent of a ship's concert a week before. Cape Tekel was, of course, immediately blessed with the cognomen "Tickle Point," and the famous De Tott's battery suffered the indignity of the affectionate diminutive "Little Tot." These have become classical names to the men in the Triumph. Even the dignified gunnery experts had to bow to the inevitable force of public

opinion, and would solemnly give instructions to their gun-layers to train on "Old Jim" or "Totty," as the case might be.

The Spirit of the Officers

Officers are no less guilty of waggishness, and at moments when one would think there was little time for levity. We were steaming out of range after a particularly hot engagement. The Triumph had been under an inconvenient cross fire. Shells had been shrieking over her and occasionally bursting on her armour. The enemy's gun positions were well concealed, and until the gun-layers had become accustomed to the terrain, it was difficult to make any effective reply. The situation was relieved by the timely arrival of the Swiftsure. She at once took on battery "X" leaving the Triumph free to concentrate on "Y." These works were thoroughly searched, and one by one the enemy's guns ceased firing.

The fore-control officers had had a particularly nerve-racking time in their exposed position, several shells having passed quite near to the foretop and fallen into the sea on our starboard bow. As we were steaming away after the action the Triumph found time to make the following signal to her sister ship : "Fore-control officers Triumph to ditto Swiftsure. Do you bob ?" Shortly a reply was received : "Fore-control Swiftsure to ditto Triumph. No ; we only bow."

Cheery Souls These !

On another occasion, as we rejoined the fleet after the day's work, we noticed that a certain battleship had been changing her dress during the day. She was painted with curious black daubs, an effect which, on the dull grey background, may have been useful at long distance to reduce her visibility, but at close quarters was grotesque. Officers on the bridge were joking at her expense, and the Captain made a

signal: "Captain to Captain: I think your funnels and bows look very artistic." A reply was flashed back: "Thanks. Don't mistake me for a cloud."

* * *

Letters always produce great excitement in a ship, and the bluejacket seems to delight to tell his messmate all the news, whether the letter happens to be from his mother or his sweetheart. "Fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," and life in a man-o'-war produces a strange family spirit. The other day a pert destroyer brought us a mail under the very guns of a recently demolished fort, and within sight of the Turkish look-out! How annoyed they must have been that these amenities of life should continue right under their noses!

This mail brings bad news. We hear that there are strikes at home, and we partly believe it, knowing as we do something of the British workman and the conditions under which he works. The Jack Tar is not a capitalist, nor has he

any inherent respect for wealth. Moreover he knows from his own brothers at home how often these industrial outbreaks occur, how repeatedly they are smoothed over, and how little is done to get at their root. He is eminently anxious to see fair play.

Almost to a man, their message to the worker at home now, to employer as well as to employed, is just this: "Be a sport; don't let us down; play the game. At times like this there's plenty to grouse about, here as well as there, but let's wait till it's over, and in the meantime stand the racket, even if it don't seem fair! War isn't all honey, boys, at home or abroad. Weeks of salt pork, no butter, canteen run out of 'fags,' never a 'make and mend' for heaven knows how long" (a 'make and mend' is a naval synonym for a half-day 'off'), "and 'night defence' weeks on end takes it out of you; but just keep smiling!" That is a *résumé* of many conversations I have listened to on the mess decks.

I overheard a delightful dialogue during action the other day. Two E.R.A.'s (*i.e.* engine-room artificers) were talking. One was good-humouredly complaining that he had not had a good night's sleep for over a week. "Tell yer what, matey," he finished up, "when I get back to 'Guz' and go home for a spell, I am going under war routine! I am going to darken ship, close down all hatches, and sleep for two days on end!" "Ho, ho! will yer?" replied the other; "you'll have to get th' Admiral's permission to do that. That's the worst of being married!"

* * *

No, it isn't all honey. On a certain occasion this month, at a fort considerably south of the Dardanelles, after several days' heavy bombardment, a truce was arranged by mutual consent. From 10 a.m. till 4 p.m. hostilities were to cease while negotiations proceeded. Every ship in the squadron hoisted a white flag. The Triumph's was improvised out of numerous sick-bay sheets sewn together!

It was a welcome respite, for the men had had a strenuous time day and night, and were glad of a "stand easy." We were lying off, within easy range of the shore batteries. Groups of officers stood about on the quarter-deck speculating as to the nature of the negotiations. On the fo'c'sle men were sitting about yarning and smoking, rejoicing in a rest amid such gorgeous scenery. "We'll get our dinner in peace to-day for a change," some one remarked.

Circumstances proved otherwise. At 12.25 shrapnel shells burst all round us! One was a little short; another was over; a third a "wide." The ship's company were at dinner, groups of them were sunning themselves "forrard." Every one automatically hastened to his battle station. The indignation of the men was intense. As I passed down the ladders I overheard much of their views, expressed in the choicest lower-deckese. A great deal is unprintable, but their chief complaint was that the enemy should

have chosen their *dinner hour* for this exhibition of frightfulness.

Our white flag was hauled down, and in eighty seconds every man was at his station, not a few with pieces of salt pork and hunks of bread in their hands. The less fortunate, in their hurry, had only succeeded in grabbing slabs of "duff." Within three minutes the range had been found, and an effective fire of 7·5 " salvos was returned, silencing their guns and blowing up a magazine. At 12.37 the captain drew the ship out of range to enable the ship's company to enjoy the remainder of their dinner hour. Subsequently permission was obtained to return and complete the destruction of the battery by deliberate fire. From 12.25 to 12.37 was what our allies call "*un mauvais quart d'heure*," but it was the busiest I have ever seen.

A "MAKE AND MEND"

XII

A "MAKE AND MEND"

. . . My Mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought and thought with me—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine. . . .

SCENE: wardroom. Time: towards the end of the first dog watch, say 5.45 p.m. Officers forgather, healthily hot, sparingly clad, obviously thirsty.

Since the forenoon there has been no bombardment. The free afternoon has been celebrated by a "make and mend." Tired matlows have slept, in odd places, in odder attitudes. Energetic ones have washed clothes, or written letters in view of the possibility of a mail departing in the near future. After tea, officers, having doffed their blues and donned flannels,

have been taking exercise on the quarter-deck. A strange but strenuous game, to wit that known as "sand-bagging," has been in progress since five o'clock. It is worth knowing this "*jeu de sand-bag.*"

If the sail-maker is good tempered, he can be induced to sew up, in flat, circular, canvas envelopes, quantities of sand weighing about six pounds. Two such missiles are the only instruments necessary for this fascinating sport. All else is supplied by dexterous hands and nimble feet. Experience teaches that a few reserve bags are desirable, for in the limited field of a battleship's quarter-deck an "outside" is an "overboard," and the mermaids and dolphins cannot be induced to "throw in."

"S.O.B.'s and B.Y.S.'s"

To-day there are numerous players, and the more the merrier.

"What's it to be to-day?" asks the agile young doctor, recovering his normal

OFFICER-ARTISTES AT A CONCERT ON BOARD.

stance after frequent vain efforts to walk upon his hands.

"Same sides as before," suggests the torpedo lieutenant, "S.O.B.'s *versus* "B.Y.S.'s."

Now it must be noted that the torpedo lieutenant is rapidly becoming inelegantly corpulent. It is clear to the most casual beholder that not without difficulty has he thrust his obese frame into those whites. It is whispered that he finds the negotiation of the narrow iron ladders and tortuous passages which lead to his torpedo flat an increasing hardship. Tell it not in Gath, but he is beginning to regard sand-bags as a means of grace!

"So be it, your corpulency. Get yourselves sorted. Let's see who's who. S.O.B.'s starboard; B.Y.S.'s port."

Two lines are drawn up. On the one hand all the decrepit ineptitude of the wardroom; on the other its youth and beauty. At least so the B.Y.S.'s regard it. The staid three-stripers, who are mysteriously dubbed S.O.B.'s, would doubt-

less say that the sides represented the wisdom and dignity of the service *versus* the brainless babes who unnecessarily decorate it. It is a matter of opinion.

The starboard line includes the commander, lithe and youthful for the dignity of an S.O.B., and the torpedo lieutenant above-mentioned, familiarly known as John Bull. He much resembles that worthy in quantity and quality. The glory of side-whiskers, recently acquired, add to the resemblance. There is the dashing captain of marines, known to his intimates as "*the* soldier." One would think that His Majesty's forces contained no other. The staff-surgeon, dignified with premature grey hairs, fastidiously tended, and the gunnery lieutenant, boisterous and rubicund, add to the picturesqueness, if not to the strength, of the S.O.B.'s.

"Casey Jones"

A tall figure appearing suddenly from the wardroom hatchway is hailed by

a chorus of yells. "Becky, you must play!" "Come and raise a sweat, Pilot." But no; Lieutenant-Commander Sharp (N), with the perennial twinkle in his grey eyes, and the unceasing twitch of his upper lip, will not play. "Correcting charts," he mournfully explains, and proceeds bridgewards.

The port line, the B.Y.S.'s, has in it the engineer lieutenant, cryptically known as "Casey Jones." His praises are daily ground out by an effete gramophone which adorns the wardroom. The repertory of the said gramophone has as its *pièce de résistance* a strange song concerning a "brave engineer," but what he did to merit the title cannot be heard above the din of engines and the escape of steam which form a running accompaniment to the words of the songster. The lieutenant of the Royal Marine Light Infantry also graces the B.Y.S.'s. His title is the "young soldier," thereby accentuating his inferiority to the dashing captain in the starboard line. Some watch-keepers,

assistant-paymasters, the young doctor, and the Padre complete the B.Y.S. team.

"Take your places," some one sings out, and the players arrange themselves, alternately an S.O.B. and a B.Y.S., in two parallel lines.

"A dummy run to begin with," suggests "Number One," *id est*, the gunnery lieutenant.

The two end players are standing each side of a mushroom-head ventilator. That is "home." Three times they strike "home" with the sand-bags, and then each throws his missile to his colleague in the opposite line. At once it is sent back to the man of the same "side" facing him, and so the bags go in zig-zag course to the end of the line, and return by a similar route. The "dummy run" safely accomplished, each player knows the man to whom he is to throw the ball. The game now begins in earnest.

"Stand by! Go!" Bang, bang, bang, on the ventilator head, and quick as lightning the sand-bags fly from hand

to hand on their zig-zag course. As they come back to the end player each time, they must be banged "home" before the next journey is begun. Ten times constitutes a game, and the side that gets there first is the winner. Occasionally in their flight the bags meet and fall, and there is a *mêlée* of struggling humanity fighting for their recovery. That constitutes the genius of the game. A skilful player will produce such a *dénouement* at the psychological moment, and a swift recovery often means time gained over one's opponents. The excitement is punctuated by savage shouts and yells.

"Go it, S.O.B.'s! We're one ahead!"

"Oh, soldier, you butter-fingers!"

"Chuck it higher, you blighter!"

"Come on, B.Y.S.'s, we're gaining!"

"Don't stop to embrace the bally bag, send it straight on, you fool!"

"Ugh! Careful of my midriff, you . . .! Sorry, Padre."

"We're one ahead. Now for it!"

"Eight: Splendid!"

"Nine: Oh, we're nearly there!"

"Ten!!! Good egg. We're one up."

Then the player at the bottom of the line moves to the top, and the whole column moves down one. The process is continued until the rubber is completed.

Not a bad game, and under such conditions as make more reputable forms of sport impossible, a game well worth cultivating. It has points over deck hockey, which, however, is occasionally attempted for a change.

Well, a little skipping, or some leap-frog perhaps, to finish the hour; but already most of the B.Y.S.'s and *all* the S.O.B.'s have evaporated. The latter may be found reclining in the wardroom, panting, sweating, wheezing, imploring the more youthful to procure for them liquid refreshment prior to the bath.

A PREVIOUS ATTEMPT

XIII

A PREVIOUS ATTEMPT

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

More than a hundred years ago, in circumstances very different from those which prevail at present, a British Fleet, under Admiral Duckworth, was directed to force the Dardanelles, and, if necessary, to bombard Constantinople.

In Campbell's "Lives of British Admirals" an excellent account of the attempt is given. From it important lessons were learned, and though the conditions of naval warfare to-day bear little resemblance to those which faced Admiral Duckworth in 1807, yet it is clear that provision has been made to prevent

a recurrence of the ill-success which attended his efforts.

As the book is not easily accessible to the general reader, Campbell's description is worth quoting.

"The French," he writes, "who certainly excel us in diplomatic intrigue, had for a long time possessed great influence at the court of Constantinople. Their influence, however, had been destroyed by the attempt of Buonaparte against Egypt; and the British nation, on the other hand, by the victory of Aboukir, and their subsequent expulsion of the French from Egypt, had been very popular with the Porte.

"In consequence, however, of the war between Russia and Turkey, which had been produced by the intrigues of the French, Britain was threatened with hostilities with the Porte also. The British Ministry at that time, consisting of the Fox party, endeavoured to reconcile Russia and Turkey, but finding their efforts ineffectual, they resolved to interfere in a

more efficient manner. For this purpose Admiral Duckworth was directed to proceed, with seven sail of the line, a frigate, and two sloops, to force the Dardanelles, and bombard Constantinople, if certain terms should not be acceded to by the Turkish government.

"On March 19 (1807)," he continues, "Admiral Duckworth proceeded to fulfil his orders. The fire from the outer castles annoyed his ships but very little, but a very heavy cannonade was directed against them between Sestos and Abydos from both these castles, and within point-blank shot. The fire was returned by the British squadron, and with such effect, that by the time the sternmost vessels passed it had slackened considerably, and they sustained very little damage.

"Sir Sidney Smith was directed by Admiral Duckworth to the attack of a small Turkish fleet, which was at anchor to the north-east of the castles; this enterprise he performed most effectually, the vessels being driven on shore, where

they were destroyed. A detachment of marines was also sent from the Active who succeeded in spiking the guns of a formidable battery at Point Pesques.

Off Constantinople

"On the evening of the 20th, the squadron anchored about eight miles from Constantinople. Mr. Arbuthnott, who had been our Ambassador there, but who had sought refuge on board Admiral Duckworth's ship, now sent his despatches on shore under a flag of truce. In consequence, one of the Turkish ministers came off to wait on the Ambassador, and it was supposed from the conversation that took place that matters would be amicably settled. Soon afterwards, however, the Ambassador was taken ill, and the Admiral was under the necessity of carrying on the negotiation. It continued to the 27th, and during this interval such, unfortunately, was the state of the weather, that the Admiral could not occupy such a position as would have enabled him to

have given more effect to the negotiation, by threatening the city with bombardment.

"He threatened indeed, but the Turks well knew that he could not execute his threats; and they lengthened out the negotiations, knowing that thus they would be strengthened while their opponents' situation would daily become more critical and dangerous. The time which had been employed by the English commander in empty threats, had been occupied by the Turks in the most active and effectual preparations. The whole line of the coast presented a chain of batteries; twelve line of battleships were ready with their sails bent, and filled with troops; an innumerable multitude of small craft with fire vessels had been collected; and there was besides a large army at Constantinople.

Failure of the Attempt

"It was evident from this, that even if the weather had been favourable for an attack, the issue of it must have been

extremely doubtful; and if Admiral Duckworth did succeed, it was still necessary to repass the Dardanelles; and how could this be done with ships disabled by the previous attack?

"The idea of waiting for a wind to bombard the city was now abandoned; and the Admiral, wounded both in his pride and ambition, on April 1 weighed anchor, and by the next day at noon every ship had cleared the passage of the Dardanelles. The passage, however, was attended with great danger. The fire of the inner castle, which had been severe in the first passage, was doubly formidable on the return. The Windsor Castle was struck by a granite shot of eight hundred pounds' weight. The killed and wounded during the passage amounted to a very considerable number; the damage also done to the rigging and hulls of most of the ships was very great. In the whole of this fatal and disastrous enterprise about three hundred British officers and seamen were killed and wounded.

"It is evident from this account of the enterprise that it was ill-planned. Certainly troops ought to have been put on board the ships for the purpose of occupying the castles which defended the passage. If the passage had thus been rendered clear, the fleet might have waited till the weather became favourable for the bombardment or attack of Constantinople."

Amphibious Warfare

In the present campaign, from the outset, the authorities who were actually on the spot directing operations claimed that the work must essentially be one of an amphibious character. The Allied Fleet to-day is not so dependent, as was Admiral Duckworth's, upon favourable winds. But weather conditions inevitably affect the operations of any fleet, and during the early stages of the attack it was repeatedly found that when rough seas made effective bombardment impossible, favourable opportunity was given

to the enemy to do repairs, and to get into position movable batteries and howitzers.

When, for example, after the reduction of the forts at the entrance, bad weather confined the work of the fleet to patrolling, the interval was profitably used by the Turks, and, on resuming the attack, the ships were embarrassed by the fire of field guns which had been brought down the coast. The presence of land forces could doubtless have prevented these measures.

Tips from Tsingtau

Although the Triumph, when bombarding at close range, had on more than one occasion such success that enemy guns were actually seen to be slewed round or knocked upward, the reduction of land fortifications by ships' guns is generally regarded as a matter of doubtful success, however close the range may be. The experience of the Triumph at Tsingtau was valuable. She had learned to dis-

trust silenced forts. Often guns would reopen fire after hours of silence had given the impression that they were out of action. In the Dardanelles, only by putting ashore "demolition parties" could the complete destruction of the guns be assured. And this is hazardous work.

Effectiveness of the Marines

Parties of marines from the ships were but a mere handful in comparison with the forces on shore, and not infrequently, in the earlier days of the attack, they suffered heavily at the hands of the enemy who, in superior numbers, were entrenched behind the forts. The arrival of a large contingent of the Naval Brigade from England was greeted with great joy, and when, shortly afterwards, numerous transports brought the French troops, it was clear that the magnitude of the enterprise had not been under-estimated. Then, as each day filled the harbour with more and more ships, ships

coming from all directions, and bringing with them English, Scotch, and Irish regiments, and regiments from far Australia and New Zealand, the spirit of cheery optimism, which ever marks the British Tar, was manifested in a degree rarely seen before.

The last century has brought with it many changes, not least in the art of war, and a comparison of the work of the Allied Fleets and Armies operating now in the Dardanelles, with the ill-starred attempt of Admiral Duckworth's "Seven sail of the line, a frigate, and two sloops" in 1807, gives some indication of its evolution.

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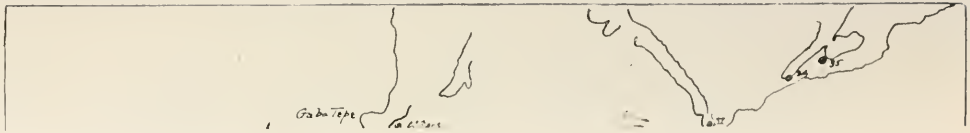
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